

**TOWN OF ROCKY HILL
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
MEETING OF MARCH 16, 2015**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Nadine Bell called the March 16, 2015 Public Safety Committee meeting to order at 5:45 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Rocky Hill Town Hall, 761 Old Main Street, Rocky Hill, CT.

Those in attendance: Councilor Guy Drapeau. Also present: Guy Scaife (Director of Public Safety/Town Manager), Lt. Rob Catania (RHPD), Chief Mike Garrahy (RHFD) Assistant Chief Dave Kromas (RHFD), Fire Marshal Rich Renstrom, Lt. Brian Klett (RHPD), Sgt. Joe Phelps (RHPD) and Councilor Cathy Vargas.

Those absent: Councilor Bill MacDonald, Chief Mike Custer (RHPD), Chief Joe Grayeb (RHVAA) and Deputy Chief Vivian Grayeb (RHVAA).

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilor Drapeau made a motion to approve the Minutes of the February 17, 2015 meeting of the Public Safety Committee. The motion was seconded by Chairwoman Bell and adopted unanimously by those present.

III. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Chairwoman Bell asked if anyone from the public wished to speak. Cathy Vargas, 63 Richard Road, R.H. said she was speaking as a resident now and not a Councilor. She had a comment for the RHPD and she wanted to bring it to this Committee's attention. She had called dispatch twice with regards to Valley Brook Road near Maple View Manor. There must be some type of a class three or four times during the week at Maple View Manor where eight or nine cars are parked on one side of Valley Brook Road even though there is an area plowed out at Maple View Manor, which is always empty, where these cars could park. She had brought this to the former Town Manager Gilbert's attention one year ago and "No Parking" signs were put up. Those help but these cars are parking right where those signs stop. Dispatch had told her one of the times that she had called that there was nothing that could be done about this. There was parking on both sides of the street the day after that. Cars can't go up or down Valley Brook Road without almost hitting snowbanks when there is snow. People have to walk up Valley Brook Road when they get out of their cars and she doesn't want anyone to get hit. Lt. Catania said this will be looked into.

IV. DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

A. Fire

Chief Garrahy said the RHFD had responded to 82 incidents in February, with a year-to-date total of 139, which is 36 incidents higher than where they were one year ago. There were no reported injuries. Staffing is at 65 active members with two members on leaves of absence. There were two terminations. For the Fire Marshal's Office, 22 building inspections were done and 17 construction inspections. There were 4 Certificate of Occupancy inspections. There were 8 sprinkler test inspections and there were 3 fire pump tests. Fifteen complaints were answered. No apparatus accidents were reported in February. Three of the members have successfully completed the certification process. Two more members are currently completing the process and 1 of these is waiting for his test results. Councilor Drapeau asked if there are a total of 5 or 3. Chief Garrahy said it is 5. Councilor Drapeau said that 3 are in then and he asked if those got their total active members up to 65. Councilor Garrahy said the 3 are in that number.

Assistant Chief Kromas said they are continuing with the radio upgrades. After he did an inventory recently, he had given some updated numbers to Town Manager Scaife. Assistant Chief Kromas said the RHFD is continuing to work with the RHPD and they will hopefully move forward to the full digital upgrade for their UHF system.

Chairwoman Bell asked Chief Garrahy if he did any exit interviews for the two members that left and he said the two terminated members had left because of non-participation in months.

Chief Garrahy said the RHFD has presented their five year apparatus plan to Town Manager Scaife. This includes the right-sizing of the fleet, which will take the RHFD from five Engines, two Rescues and three Trucks to three Engines, one Rescue and two Trucks. Chief Garrahy said there will be a "ton" of substantial savings, as well as a "slew" of ancillary savings (i.e. air pack and hose testing, etc.). New air packs and a different vendor, of which they are seeing some savings with, were also looked at. Twenty air packs will be cut if they go to this right-sizing plan. Councilor Drapeau was looking forward to seeing the apparatus plan. Town Manager Scaife said this would be mentioned in more detail at the Town Council meeting this evening.

Chief Garrahy referred to the recruitment grant the RHFD received. He and three other members had attended an all-day training session in Cromwell on February 28, 2015. They are preparing their twelve to sixteen month master strategy, which will be done by the end of this month. There will be some public service announcements within the next week or two with regards to the RHFD looking for more help.

Town Manager Scaife said the numbers don't tell a lot of the story. He recognized Fire Marshal Renstrom, who has had an horrendous couple of months, of which much of this was weather driven. Fire Marshal Renstrom had an untold number of callouts and it is amazing how many hours it takes for the Fire Marshal's Office to oversee some of the activities and responsibilities. Town Manager Scaife is greatly appreciative of all of the efforts. Chairwoman Bell told Fire Marshal Renstrom on behalf of this Committee that she wanted to offer their thanks also for his efforts. Fire Marshal Renstrom said it was a remarkable month.

B. Ambulance

No one was present from the RHVAA this evening.

C. Police

Lt. Catania said there were 1,846 calls for service for the RHPD in February. There were 316 ambulance calls. There were 82 fire calls, of which 29 were related to being dispatched and 53 were non-related fire responses, which more than likely came through the Fire Marshal's Office. There were 36 criminal arrests, 47 motor vehicle accidents and 4 DUIs. There were 77 infractions, 163 warnings and 43 Town Ordinance tickets issued. A lot of the Town Ordinance tickets were from the RHPD working with the RHFD. The RHPD had 4 community service events. There were 4 car seat installations. There was 1 simple assault, 26 overall larcenies and 18 Breaches of Peace.

Three recruits will be graduating from the Police Academy on March 19, 2015. One Officer is on light duty due to maternity leave. One Officer is on administrative light duty and one dispatcher is still on temporary light duty. There is a background investigation, which should be completed by Friday, being done on a dispatcher candidate.

For 60 West Street, there was one ambulance transport in February. There are 19 occupants there who are from the Department of Corrections and 32 who are from the Department of Mental Health.

Councilor Drapeau asked if there have been any issues on the corner of France Street and Rte. 3 due to the construction congestion. Lt. Catania said District Officers have been doing a great job in providing extra attention whenever they receive complaints, which are addressed immediately. He confirmed with Lt. Klett that there hasn't been a complaint recently and he said there hasn't been.

Councilor Drapeau said the RHPD has requested pothole patching on the State roads and he asked if anything has been heard from the State as to whether they are planning on coming out soon. Lt. Catania knew the State was working today on Rte. 3, Elm Street and Rte. 160 and it has done its best in trying to address a couple of these potholes that are significant.

Chairwoman Bell said she had one concern which had surfaced within the last month during a long duration storm. The RHPD had been shoveling sidewalks and she asked Town Manager Scaife if he could address that for clarification purposes. Town Manager Scaife said that storm was anticipated to being a three day event and Town Hall had been closed. There had been several internal meetings to prepare for that and due to the severity of that storm, a joint decision was made by himself, the Director of the Custodians and the Police Chief that the custodians wouldn't be kept overnight just to shovel the sidewalk to and from the front door of the RHPD. At the request of the Director of Public Works, the Police had also been asked that unless they had an active call for them to keep their Staff off of the roads and to keep the vehicles in so that problems wouldn't be created for the plows that were trying to keep the roads clear. Town Manager Scaife told the citizens that if they have any concerns about these types of activities for them to please not hesitate to call so that these can be addressed and dealt with in a timely manner.

V. OTHER

Town Manager Scaife said Sergeant Phelps had briefed him on Friday about NexGen, which is an application that will be replacing an existing one that is woefully short in terms of its capabilities and that will have benefits for both the RHFD and also the RHPD, which will have the bigger benefits. There isn't a lot of difference between NexGen and the current application. Town Manager Scaife said they hope to be live with this by this June. These kinds of steps will gain them efficiency and productivity in an operation. NexGen will self-populate information to be brought into a report so manual entries of the same data won't have to be handwritten in or keyed in over and over again on a form or on a screen. It is exciting to see this coming to fruition and in years coming forth, this will pay dividend after dividend.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Drapeau made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:05 p.m. The motion was seconded by Chairwoman Bell and adopted unanimously by those present.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo-Anne Booth
Recording Secretary